

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BONN 07527 091838Z

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /016 W

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R 091825Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9973

INFO USIA WASHDC

USMISSION USBERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL

SUBJECT: BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL

REF: STATE 095694

PASS TO USIA/IMV AND IWE

1. BOTH THE EMBASSY AND THE USMISSION BELIEVE THE TIME MAY HAVE COME TO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT US PARTICIPATION IN SUBJECT FESTIVAL. THE REASONS FOR MINIMAL US INTEREST IN AND RESPONSE TO THE FESTIVAL IN RECENT YEARS HAVE BEEN THOROUGHLY EXPOUNDED IN MESSAGES TO STATE AND USIA/IMV AND IWE. HOWEVER, THE TIMES AND THE NATURE OF THE FESTIVAL HAVE CHANGED; AND PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE FAR GREATER VARIETY OF PARTICIPANTS THIS YEAR; IT IS PROPOSED THAT MPAA AND THE US PRODUCERS RECONSIDER THEIR POSITION AND PAY ONCE MORE GREATER ATTENTION TO THE FESTIVAL. HENCE WE REQUEST THAT THE DEPARTMENT AND USIA MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO CONVINCE THE AMERICAN PRODUCERS OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE FESTIVAL IN 1975, IF STILL POSSIBLE, AND CERTAINLY IN 1976 AND BEYOND.

2. WITH THE APRIL 30 DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES PAST, IT APPEARS THE US WILL BE REPRESENTED BY ONLY ONE FEATURE FILM IN THE 1975 FESTIVAL SCHEDULED FROM JUNE 27 TO
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JULY 8, AND EVEN THIS ONE US ENTRY (WARNER BROS. PRODUCTION "LOVE AND DEATH" BY AND WITH WOODY ALLEN) APPEARS

SOMEWHAT PROBLEMATIC SINCE THE FILM IS NOT YET FINISHED. THE FESTIVAL AUTHORITIES WOULD PROBABLY WAIVE THEIR DEADLINE IF ADDITIONAL MAJOR US ENTRIES WERE OFFERED SOON.

3. THIS IS THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FESTIVAL WHICH WAS STARTED AT US INITIATIVE. THIS YEAR, OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION IN COMPETITION WILL FOR THE FIRST TIME INCLUDE THE USSR. A TOTAL OF 47 COUNTRIES HAVE ANNOUNCED THEIR PARTICIPATION, AMONG THEM EIGHT FROM EASTERN EUROPE.

4. IN URGING MPAA AND THE PRODUCERS TO STEP UP THEIR PARTICIPATION, WE SUGGEST OUR EFFORTS AT PERSUASION BE BASED ON:

(A) THE CONTINUING UNIQUE NEED FOR DEMONSTRATING US INTEREST IN AND COMMITMENT TO WEST BERLIN;

(B) HEIGHTENED SENSITIVITIES IN WEST BERLIN CULTURAL AND MEDIA CIRCLES TOWARD POSSIBLE SHIFTS IN US INTEREST AND PRIORITIES BECAUSE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF OUR EMBASSY IN EAST BERLIN, A CONCERN FURTHER SHARPENED BY EXTENSIVE SOVIET CULTURAL EFFORTS IN WESTERN SECTORS;

(C) A CLEAR RECOGNITION BY THE FESTIVAL AUTHORITIES OF PAST DIFFICULTIES AND THEIR REASONS, AND A VERY STRONG DESIRE ON THEIR PART TO SPONSOR A FESTIVAL WORTHY SIGNIFICANT US PARTICIPATION.
HILLENBRAND

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MOTION PICTURES, CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS, REPRESENTATION AT CEREMONIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975BONN07527
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750164-0408
From: BONN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750563/aaaacfkfkg.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 095694
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 MAY 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <08 OCT 2003 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL
TAGS: SCUL, GE, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006